

"*Palimpsest* refers to a parchment upon which new material has been inscribed over the old; presumably the previous text is no longer visible. I have developed the definition to insinuate that the spirit of the old text is still present as a ghost, hovering over the life of the new. Unlike the two earlier trios which use recognizable material borrowed from Mozart (*Piano Trio No. 1* from 1980) or from Irish tradition (*Piano Trio No. 2 Drowsey Maggie* from 1989), the musical fabric of this piece tends toward a kind of musical neutrality. It is as though a synthesis of styles has occurred, much as a kind of blending of old and new text in a real palimpsest.

Although *Palimpsest* is in the traditional three-movement form, the concept of slow music versus fast occurs within each movement rather than in the relationship of movements. Movement I begins like a French overture and becomes fast, while Movement II is mostly slow with fast interruptions, and the Finale attempts to build on accumulated forward momentum which is then thwarted and revived. Throughout the entire piece, the thematic material is continually being chewed up and developed so that it is often difficult to identify the source of a particular melodic fragment. Like the ancient parchment, my *Palimpsest* partially erases the definite identity of a given theme in order to give way to a synthetic process of assimilation. To some extent I experiment with this process in the slow revelation of the *Drowsey Maggie* tune in *Piano Trio No. 2*, except that it produced a goal oriented finale. Here the goal is sacrificed for a more stylistically integrated development that emulates a kind of cinematic seamlessness.

*Palimpsest* was commissioned by the Verdehr Trio and Michigan State University for the Verdehr Trio."

—Paul Reale

The world premiere of *Palimpsest* was on July 22, 1998 at the Verdehr Trio Summer Chamber Music Concert Series, Concert 3 at the Wharton Center, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan.

Paul Reale (born 1943, New Jersey) received his education at Columbia College in English literature and science. Although music was a lifelong study, it was not until 1967 that he received a degree in composition at Columbia under the primary tutelage of Chou Wen-Chung and Otto Luening. A decision to enter college teaching prompted further study at the University of Pennsylvania where he came under the influence of George Rochberg and George Crumb.

The composer's catalogue includes ten piano sonatas, nine concertos for various instruments including *Columbus Concerto for Organ and Winds* which was written for the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the discovery of America, three piano concertos, two song cycles, and dozens of other vocal and dramatic works. In 2006, Reale won the Definiens Project Music Competition Contest which resulted in a commission for *Your Reality Check is in the Mail*, a work for oboe, alto saxophone, violin, cello, and piano. *Sacred Geometry 2* for violin and viola received Special Mention for the personal language in balance between tradition and innovation at the 2005 International EPICMUSIC Composition Competition, and *Piano Sonata No. 6, The Waste Land* received a prize in the New Ariel Music Competition in 2007.

Piano and chamber works are recorded on Cinnabar Records, Capstone, and Music & Arts CDs (CelloAmerica, TrioAmerica, and 20<sup>th</sup>-Century Series). Reale's music is published by Carl Fischer Inc., Laurendale Associates, Theodore Presser Co., and Yelton Rhodes which carries two volumes of solo piano pieces for beginners using contemporary techniques. He has written both aesthetic and analytical articles on twentieth-century topics from Ives to Boulez, a number of which have appeared as booklets to accompany CDs.

In 1969, Reale joined the music faculty of UCLA in an attempt to escape the East Coast establishment for the rich, multicultural environment of Southern California. In 1995, he received the Charles and Harriet Luckman Award for Distinguished Teaching. Retired from UCLA since 2005, Reale continues to compose and manage the Reale-Rydell website ([www.minotaurz.com](http://www.minotaurz.com)) with his wife, photographer Claire Rydell.